

Biographical & Historical Memoirs of North East Arkansas  
Goodspeed's

## Gant

**Gant Bros.**, general merchants, Harrisburg, Ark. One of the leading characteristics of our commercial fabric is the size and extent of the mercantile business in the various cities of Poinsett County. A vast capital is invested in this important industry, and many persons are furnished remunerative employment.

Among the leading establishments of this kind, none are more deserving of more favorable mention and consideration than that of **Gant Bros.**, the individual members of the firm being **J. G., J. B. and J. W. Gant**. They are the sons of **James W. and Sarah (Keller) Gant**, natives of Tennessee and North Carolina, respectively. The parents were married in Tennessee in 1852, and the father opened a drug store in Memphis, which he conducted successfully until 1856, when he removed with his family to what is now Craighead County, Ark., where he bought land, and opened up a large plantation.

In 1857 he was elected school commissioner, served one term, and after this he acted as surveyor and sheriff until 1861. He was then appointed as Government purchasing agent, serving in that capacity until his death, in 1863. He was a prominent member of the Masonic fraternity, and a devout Methodist. He was noted for liberal and progressive ideas, and was a strong Democrat.

He was one of eighteen children, and his brothers are as follows: John, farmer, of Texas; Benjamin, presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and who died in his pulpit, at Nashville, about 1860; Howard, blacksmith, in Missouri; William, merchant, at Spring Hill, Tenn. There are a number of others supposed to be living, but their exact location is not known. His only sister, **Mrs. Polly Hall**, is the wife of a farmer, and lives in IZARD County, Ark. **Mrs. Sarah (Keller) Gant** is the daughter of **Uriah and Julia Keller**, natives of South Carolina. Her father was a tiller of the soil. **Mrs. Gant** is one of a family of eleven children, eight of whom lived to be grown, and these are now living: John, farmer; Julia, wife of **Mr. Gayor**, and is

living at Iuka, Miss.; Mattie I., wife of **Mr. Hughes**, a hotel-keeper at Jonesboro, Ark., and Henrietta M., wife of **Mr. Whisenhunt**, a farmer of Craighead County, Ark.

To the marriage of **James W. Gant** and **Miss Sarah Keller** were born the three sons, J. G., J. B. and J. W., and one daughter, Julia E., wife of **J. W. Rooks**, a hotel-keeper at Harrisburg, Ark. Mrs. **Gant** was left a widow just on the eve of the great Civil War, with four small children to support. However, she bravely undertook the task, and first engaged in farming, and then kept a boarding house. The children were able to assist her after a little, and later relieved her of their support altogether. She now makes her home with them, and no mother is thought more of than she is by her children, who vie in making her declining years happy and comfortable. She is the owner of several good homes in Craighead and Poinsett Counties, and is living for her children, bestowing all the wealth of a mother's love on them.

**J. G. Gant**, the senior member of the firm of **Gant Bros.**, was born in 1853, reared to farm life, educated at Jonesboro, and at the age of eighteen embarked in the grocery business. He sold out, and then returned to farm work, which he continued for three years. He then entered the saloon business, which he followed with success until 1883, when the above firm was organized. They carry a large stock of general merchandise, and buy and sell grain and cotton.

**J. G. Gant** was married, in October, 1888, to **Miss Lena Lewis**, of Woodruff County. J. B. and J. W. were educated at Jonesboro and Harrisburg, and also took a commercial course at Ledding's Commercial College, at Memphis. In 1884 J. B. was married to **Miss Jennie Mitchell**, of Harrisburg. They have one child, Nellie, who is now four years of age, J. W. is unmarried.

All are members of the Masonic fraternity, and all Democratic in their political views. J. B. is a member of both the I. O. O. F. and K. of H. orders. The brothers are all members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and give their unqualified support to all movements conducive to the good of the community. In addition to their mercantile pursuits they are the owners of 1, 200 acres of land, 300 acres under cultivation, and are extensively engaged in stock raising. They are experimenting in several lines of stock, have Holstein cattle

(graded), Shorthorn, Durham (large red), and handle Berkshire and Poland-China hogs. They also raise horses, common cattle, sheep and Angora goats.

Poinsett County  
ArGenWeb  
2007